

**Island County Board of Health  
Regular Session - Monday, April 15, 2013  
Minutes**

**Members Present:** Commissioners Kelly Emerson, Jill Johnson and Helen Price Johnson; Anne Tarrant, Whidbey General Hospital Commissioner; Captain Edward Simmer, MC, USN, Ex-Officio Member; and, Roger S. Case, MD, Executive Secretary to the Board.

**Members Absent:** Scott Dudley, Mayor of Oak Harbor.

**Call to Order:** Chair Kelly Emerson called this Regular Session of the Island County Board of Health to order at 1:15 p.m.

**Additions or Changes to the Agenda:** There were no requested changes or additions to the agenda.

**Approval of Minutes:** The Chair called for the approval of the minutes of the March 15, 2013 Regular Meeting. There were no changes or corrections to the minutes. Commissioner Price Johnson moved to approve the minutes as written, Member Anne Tarrant seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

**Public Input or Comments:** The Chair invited members of the public who wished to provide input or make comments to indicate their wish to do so. There were no requests to address the Board.

**Presentation – Whidbey General Hospital and the Mental Health System in Island County:** Roger Case MD, Island County Health Officer, introduced Dr. Linda Gipson, Chief Nursing Officer for Whidbey General Hospital (WGH). Dr. Gipson talked about the mental health system in Island County, especially as it impacts Whidbey General Hospital and our community. She noted that 15% of the overall disease burden in the United States is mental health related. Christy Stevens, WGH Emergency Room Manager, joined Dr. Gipson and generically described a mentally ill patient who was currently in the WGH emergency room and the dilemma that poses for WGH and the patient. Dr. Gipson continued by detailing the many challenges WGH and area hospitals face dealing with patients suffering mental illness. Those challenges include: an inadequate number of available beds, inadequate psychiatric support, co-addictions, changes to commitment criteria creating more cases, police leaving arrestees, and nursing home 'dumping'. The effect is that patients do not get the needed care (i.e., access to a crisis center) and there is danger of injury to WGH staff. Dr. Gipson told the Board she thinks the solution will need to be community based interventions such as family psychological education, integrated treatments, assertive community treatment, and supported housing and employment.

Dr. Gipson informed the Board that 245 agencies have some jurisdiction over the mental health system. Additionally, only 3% of resident programs teach mental health management to emergency room physicians. In terms of solutions, there are some good models to look at to see what is working in other communities.

**Presentation – IC Board of Health Expansion Proposal:** Trish Rose, Community Health Advisory Board (CHAB) Member, addressed the Board to present CHAB's recommendation that the Board of Health change their current membership composition to 1) Include two additional members-at-large with health expertise, and 2) Rotate the mayoral position among all three mayoral-run cities. Ms. Rose told the Board that CHAB thinks these changes would enhance health policy development for Island County residents and would ensure broad representation of all the municipalities within the County. Also in attendance representing CHAB were David Macys, Laurell Brault, Sandy Ziemer and Kimberly Hitt. A discussion followed. Commissioner Price Johnson supports the mayoral rotation but is undecided on including seats for members who are not elected. Commissioner Jill Johnson thought that the Oak Harbor mayor represents the most citizens. David Macys, CHAB Member, responded that Oak Harbor represents 25% of the County's population (approximately 20,000 citizens) whereas there are approximately 80,000 citizens in Island County. The intent on rotating the mayoral positions is to make the representation more inclusive. Keith Higman noted that from a Health Department prospective, most of the Board's policy decisions are in the Environmental Health area and affect mostly rural citizens. The proposal will be considered further before any action is taken.

**Smoking of Non-Tobacco Alternatives in Public Places Under Chapter 70.160 RCW:** Keith Higman advised the Board that there is a current proposal to open a hookah lounge in Island County in the City of Oak Harbor. The issue is, if they are combusting non-tobacco product, are they allowed to operate under the smoking in public places law. The Health Department does not issue permits for this activity. The Health Department authority is enforcement after the law is violated. Commissioner Price Johnson noted that under current law, no RCW would be broken, and that the local regulations could be strengthened. Captain Simmer would like to be sure that consideration of the application would preclude their having minors or children on the premises. Commissioner Jill Johnson said she was concerned about having a residence above this business. Keith advised that the City of Oak Harbor is the jurisdiction to decide on mixed use at this location.

**Food Service (Chapter 246-215 WAC) – State Rule Change Overview:** Jill Wood, Environmental Health Director, told the Board that the State has changed the State code to be consistent with FDA language. There is no need to change Island County code as it refers to the State rule. She assured the Board that Island County Public Health staff will try to implement the new rules with common sense. Staff is working on a food establishment email database to allow for efficient distribution of changes, announcements, recalls, etc.

**Contracts:** Keith Higman presented three contracts to the Board for their consideration.

1. Whatcom County – Community Transformation Grant  
Contract No. 201210013, Amendment No. 1  
Contract Amount: \$ 30,000  
Amendment Amount: \$ -0-
2. Turner Exhibits – Holmes Harbor Exhibit  
Contract No. HD-03-2013  
Contract Amount: \$ 39,965
3. Department of Ecology – On-Site Financial Assistance Grant Program  
Contract No. G1100175, Amendment No. 1  
Contract Amount: \$ 500,000  
Amendment Amount: \$ -0-


Commissioner Price Johnson moved that the contracts be approved as presented. Commissioner Jill Johnson seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

**Legislative Report:** Keith Higman told the Board that there are currently 3 State budget proposals in play. All three maintain some level of public health funding.

**Report from the Health Department:** Keith Higman was sad to report that Dr. Roger Case, Island County Health Officer, has submitted his resignation from that position to the Board of County Commissioners. Dr. Case has served an illustrious 22 year tenure with Island County as Health Officer and 17 years of service to Whidbey General Hospital sitting as a Hospital Board Commissioner. Island County Public Health is soliciting for a replacement now with an active RFP for a medical professional to serve as Health Officer. Keith and Dr. Case will review the proposals and make a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners. Anne Tarrant said that she was sad to say that the Whidbey General Hospital Board is also seeking to replace Dr. Case on the hospital's Board.

**Announcements:** The Chair thanked the Board Members for their support for the letter sent to legislators asking for their assistance by seeking a change in Tri-care provisions which currently requires non-active duty beneficiaries to be treated for chemical dependency in an inpatient facility and to allow for non-active duty to use locally available outpatient chemical dependency services.

**Adjourn:** There being no further business before the Board, Chair Emerson adjourned the meeting at 2:47 p.m. The next meeting of the Board of Health will be a Special Joint Meeting with the Community Health Advisory Board on May 14, 2013 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. to present the Linda Lee Martens Community Health Hero Awards. The next Regular Session will be held on Monday, May 20, 2013 at 1:15 p.m. in the Commissioner's Hearing Room (B102) in the Court House Annex Building.

Submitted:   
Roger S. Case, MD  
Executive Secretary to the Board

Minutes approved this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 2013  
ISLAND COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

  
Kelly Emerson, Board Chair